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TITLE:

**Child Abuse Reassessed:
The Effects of Discipline
Severity On The Child's
Social and Emotional
Development**

DATE: May 31, 1992

CHILD ABUSE REASSESSED:
THE EFFECTS OF DISCIPLINE SEVERITY
ON THE CHILD'S SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

by
Maureen J. Perry

A Thesis
Presented to the Graduate Committee
of Lehigh University
in Candidacy for the Degree of
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in
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Arts.

Date May 14, 1992

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ABSTRACT

Our ability to measure social interaction has always been plagued by the dilemma of taking something which is qualitative and quantifying it. Therefore, previous child abuse studies have taken obvious actions which cause severe injury to the child and quantified these actions as abuse. This study wished to develop a more comprehensive definition of abuse. The present study took the social interaction of parental discipline practices, a very qualitative action, and quantified it into a scale of severity ranging from low to high severity. The higher levels of severity were then redefined into a measure of abuse. Parents of 457 children were interviewed about their methods of discipline. Child behavior experts rated the practices according to the severity of each. A severity scale was produced and the high end was redefined as abuse. A multiple regression was performed, controlling for age and income, using the abuse measures and the child measures of emotional and social behavior. These measures of child behavior had been previously calculated by using Child Behavior Inventories. The overall results illustrate that the daily interaction of parent and child, in the form of discipline, can be redefined as abuse when the discipline is repetitive and severe. In addition, the discipline has negative effects on the child's social and

emotional development. More specifically, emotional discipline can be as harmful to the development of the child as physical discipline is. The regression equation showed that physical discipline creates a more aggressive, destructive child, whereas, emotional discipline creates a more insecure, withdrawn, unaffectionate child. The initial aim of the study was to shed a brighter light on the definition of abuse. By redefining abuse through the repeated interaction of parent and child, these results further illuminate the study of child abuse.

I. INTRODUCTION

The majority of child abuse literature tends to stress the "reported" acts of child maltreatment where the acts are generally extreme isolated incidents of violence. However, child maltreatment may come under the guise of much subtler parent child interactions such as discipline. Brim emphasizes that it is the repetitive behavior of parents toward a child rather than a single traumatic experience which significantly influences the child's personality development.¹ In other words, it may well be the case that it is the day to day interaction as expressed in the discipline that has the effect on the child rather than the actual or more obvious reported severe incident of abuse. Kinard speculated that children who experience abuse as an isolated incident may be likely to overcome the potential negative consequences, but children who are subject to repeated abuse may show long lasting negative developmental effects.² This suggests that in terms of damage to child development, abuse should be regarded in a much broader, more inclusive sense where abuse becomes understood as not only isolated severe incidents, but as part of the ongoing interaction between parent and child expressed through discipline.

It is the purpose of this study to determine the effect of the severity of discipline on certain aspects of the

child's development. More specifically, it wishes to develop and validate a measure of discipline severity and then assess the relationship of the discipline measure to the child's emotional and social development.

Before proceeding, it must be understood that discipline may come in two forms; physical and emotional. Physical discipline includes any action by the caretaker which has a physical nature such as slapping, hitting and spanking. Very severe physical discipline or what may be termed physical maltreatment has been shown in numerous studies to be linked with the development of aggression in children. Elmer's study between matched pairs of children, abused and non-abused, showed the abused group had a greater level of compulsivity and aggression.³ Kinard also found that abuse at younger ages was associated with increased extra punitive aggression.⁴ Bandura shows that physical abuse is likely to increase aggressive behavior in the child, by frustrating him which may increase the child's need to act aggressively, and by providing an aggressive model.⁵ In addition, Wolfe and Mosk reported a significant positive relationship between children's aggressiveness and the use of severe physical punishment.⁶ Both Bandura's and Wolfe and Mosk's findings are consistent with the social learning formulation that children can acquire aggressive behavior by observing aggressive parental models particularly in the context of disciplinary

activities. Reidy's study also found that in addition to showing more overt aggression, abused children compared to non-abused expressed significantly more fantasies that contained themes of aggression and violence.⁷ Kinard's findings seem to confirm these previous results. He found that the abuse experience had more impact on the measures of aggression than on any other area of emotional development.⁸

However, it would be an oversight to view aggression in only its overt form. Aggression may be impulsive, directed against the self in the form of self-punishment, self-criticism, and self-inflicted injury.⁹ In Green's study he showed that one external factor that might possibly contribute to the development of self-destructive behavior is severe physical punishment with a significantly higher incidence reported in abused children.¹⁰ The reasoning behind this finding is that an abused child may feel a sense of worthlessness, badness and self-hatred as a consequence of the parental assault. R. T. Ammerman's, et al, findings concurred with Green's.¹¹ Compared to controlled children, abused subjects displayed more self-destructive behavior such as suicide attempts and self-mutilation. They were also described as having "a sense of worthlessness, badness and self-hatred."¹² Why does this relationship between physical punishment and child aggression exist? There may be several possible

explanations. As stated before under the social learning paradigm, the physically punitive parent may be an aggressive model for the child to imitate. Another possibility is that, in addition, physical punishment may be a direct reinforcement of aggressive behavior. The child is not necessarily modeling the parent but may view the aggressive behavior as effective and acceptable and will become aggressive himself. Perhaps, physical punishment may even be frustrating which in turn instigates anger.¹³ Because the parent lashes out in a physical manner the child may react in a physically defensive way. There is also a developmental aspect here. Sears found that early power assertive punishment around age five may cause open aggression, but at around age twelve, it inhibits overt aggression and creates inward aggression.¹⁴ Thus, the studies seem to show an overall general finding that severe physical discipline is significantly related to both an aggressive measure and a withdrawn or anxious measure depending on how the child reacts to the parent's actions and the child's developmental stage.

Emotional abuse can be defined as injury to a child's psychological self. It's intent and effects are punitive and are generally experienced as parental hostility or rejection. Such abuse often takes the form of verbal criticism, harassment, or denigration. It can also be manifested as criticism of a child's failure to meet

unrealistic expectations or standards for his performance.¹⁵ Allinsmith had junior high boys read stories about a physically punishing mother and a psychologically punishing mother. The boys who read the "physical" story were more likely to express their aggression directly whereas those reading the "psychological" story expressed their aggression indirectly.¹⁶

Emotional abuse is most likely to be experienced as parental rejection which can have devastating consequences for personality development.¹⁷ Rohner found that rejected children tend to have negative feelings about themselves and perceive themselves as worthless and unloveable.¹⁸ Rohner's findings also showed that children who are consistently and severely rejected may be characterized by a flat affect and apathy. This may explain the results of a study of emotionally abused children which showed these children to be more somber and docile than non-abused.¹⁹ Egeland showed that verbally abused and psychologically neglected children expressed a great deal of negative emotions and lacked self-esteem.²⁰ Kinard speculated that a child whose parents are rejecting may not learn how to give love because he/she did not have a loving parental model.²¹ In addition, according to the social learning theory, parents who reject their children are training their children to reject themselves. Those who are

emotionally abused have not had their need for warmth and caring met which is extremely detrimental to the child's development of trust, for the child develops a sense of trust or mistrust according to whether his basic needs are met satisfactorily.²² Thus, if he forms mistrust, his ability to resolve other developmental tasks may be seriously impaired and will have difficulty in interpersonal relationships. Kinard believes that there is a point beyond which the severity and consistency of this abuse is so overwhelming to the child that his or her ability to respond in any manner is impaired, leaving him/her with little capacity for emotion.²³

The parental acceptance rejection theory predicts that emotional abuse by parents has consistent effects on the personality development of children.²⁴ Rejected children tend more than accepted children to be hostile aggressive, passive aggressive, dependent or defensively independent depending on the degree of rejection. They tend to have an impaired sense of self-esteem and self-adequacy, to be emotionally unstable, emotionally unresponsive and have a negative world view.²⁵ Why? The theory states that we view ourselves as we think significant others view us and if parents reject us we define ourselves as unworthy and inadequate human beings. We develop an overall negative self-evaluation, including feelings of negative self-esteem and negative self-adequacy. Furthermore, the child has not

learned how to love. He protects himself from more emotional hurt. He may stop trying to get affection from people who are important to him, thus, he becomes defensively independent. The rejected child becomes emotionally insulated, unable to freely and openly form warm lasting intimate relations with others. Thus, the rejected child may become emotionally bland and flat. He may fear more rejection and become defensively independent or withdrawn.²⁶

It must be recognized, though, that the categories of physical and emotional abuse are not mutually exclusive. It is unlikely that one occurs in isolation from another. Thus, the forms of maltreatment may confound and overlap each other making it difficult to assess the unique effects of one or the other. Keeping this effect in mind, the measures used in this study were obtained and calculated to minimize the overlap and separate, as best as possible, the emotional maltreatment from the physical maltreatment.

II. AIM OF THE STUDY

The literature thus far shows that physical maltreatment and emotional maltreatment may have differential effects according to the child's age and the severity of maltreatment. Does the physical maltreatment in fact produce a more aggressive, depressed child, whereas

emotional discipline produces a more withdrawn child? Would it be enough to show that severe emotional discipline has as much of a detrimental effect as severe physical discipline? Maybe the mere demonstration that discipline can actually be termed maltreatment or abuse according to its ongoing characteristics and severity is sufficient in order to shed a new light on what abuse actually is. In other words, this study will concentrate more precisely on the effects of parental discipline practices on the child's social and emotional development. More specifically it will ask what varying effects, if any, does physical discipline have in comparison with emotional discipline on the emotional and social development of the child. Considering the literature it would seem that a more physically disciplining parent would produce a more aggressive, destructive and unhappy child whereas an emotionally disciplining parent would produce an anxious withdrawn and unfriendly child.

III. METHOD

A. Data

The data used for this study was taken from a lengthy and extensive longitudinal study involving the assessment of abused and non-abused children from over 297 families. The 457 children from these families selected for study

were initially assessed during their preschool years from 18 months to 6 years and again at school age from 6 to 10 years. The preschool study consisted of families cited for abuse in two counties in Northeast Pennsylvania. The National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect funded this study during 1967-76 as a follow-up on these abusive families in order to determine the frequency with which abuse recurs. The second aspect of this study, funded by the National Institute of Mental Health, moved away from the actual abusive acts and dealt with more family functioning in abusing and non-abusing families.

During 1980-82, the NCCAN funded a second study to reassess these same families where the children were now of school age. In addition, a middle income group was included as a control. Thus, 457 children from these families selected for study were initially assessed during their preschool years from age 18 months to 6 years and again at school age from 6 years to 10 years. These measures included observer interactions of parent and child in the home setting in addition to interviews with the parents involving questions ranging from income to discipline practices. Child behavior ratings were also done in the home as well as in the classroom by classroom observers and a cognitive testing administrator. These measures would provide a fuller picture of the child's development across the various aspects of social competence

and functioning. The major aim of the larger project was to provide a more precise and explicit explanation of how the child's cognitive, social, emotional and physical development is impacted by maltreatment.

B. Definition of the Variables

It is one thing to say we want to study the effects of maltreatment; it is yet another to actually describe or define what maltreatment actually is. Several stages of definitions have emerged since the first medical definition was proposed by Kempe.²⁷ The medical definition states that abuse is intentionally inflicted injuries stressing the pathology and intention of the maltreater. The sociological definition which followed, focused more on the actual act of maltreatment itself. It asked how serious is maltreatment and how can it be controlled? The legal definition then said abuse occurred if a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering physical harm or injury and/or if the child is suffering serious emotional damage and parents are not providing treatment. The research definition added an environmental/familial context to the prior definition. Finally, the developmental definition added the realization that the parent, child and environment are not static entities. They change, interact and develop. Thus, maltreatment becomes a developmental

issue where harm can occur or not occur depending on the child's developmental stage or age.

Previous studies have mainly used the medical definition of maltreatment, with the sources of data being medical files, case records and self-reports. This study also used all three of these sources of data, but in addition, used data which considered seriousness of maltreatment, risk of suffering physical or emotional harm, environmental context and the developmental aspects of the child. In other words, it used a combination of all the previous definitions of maltreatment in order to arrive at a more comprehensive and more accurate definition. One way in which this study defined maltreatment was by the use of discipline practices. Information on 39 discipline practices was obtained from the parent interviews. Both parents were asked about the frequency with which each practice was used. The practices ranged from mild discipline to very severe discipline. Responses were factor analyzed and several factors were labeled Burning, Hitting to bruise, Shaking/Slapping, Oral discipline, Positive discipline, Isolating/Restricting, Extreme threats, Spanking, Restricting to chair/room. These parental discipline practices were given ratings of severity according to the frequency of the practice, and the potential harm it possessed based on the age of the child in question. Thus, maltreatment became defined as

the high end of the discipline severities where the severity of the discipline was high enough, in essence, to be redefined as harmful to the child and thus, labeled maltreatment.

Maltreatment was also defined in terms of the results of the discipline practices. The results were obtained from the case record analysis of the child welfare records. The results were assigned ratings according to their severity with the high numbers being the most severe and the low numbers, the least severe. Once again, then, the high end of the severity continuum could be considered maltreatment. By relating the two, the concept of maltreatment can be validated. The measures chosen to define the concept should be sufficiently related to one another in order to say that what is being measured is actually maltreatment.

C. Measurement Procedures

1. Maltreatment: For this study, the maltreatment scale was derived from case records. Case records were obtained for the group of abused children whose families were served by child welfare agencies. The records contained several indicators of maltreatment. One of the most indicative was the actual results of the abuse. And because the study wishes to stress the effect of maltreatment on the child, the results of abuse were the

most suitable records. Thus, the severity of each type of result was determined by a group of child development specialists and was divided into four categories: physical, emotional, sexual and neglect. The severities were counted and aggregated across children for a total severity score per child for each category. This "totalled" score will then be used to validate the discipline practices.

2. Discipline: The parent interview included a section on the frequency and types of discipline a parent used. The practices were then assigned a severity rating determined by a group of child development specialists and students according to the frequency of use and the age of the child. The practices were also divided into four categories, emotional, physical, sexual, and neglect and the severities were summed across children for a total discipline severity score for each child. Thus, the discipline measures now became a continuum of severity where the high end of each continuum became an indicator or measure of maltreatment. Therefore, where abuse records were not available or where parents were inaccurate in their reports of abuse, measures of maltreatment could be obtained by use of the discipline practices. In addition, there were three time frames in which discipline practices were obtained; early childhood, preschool, and school age giving an even more accurate assessment of the child's

experience at each developmental stage. Therefore, with the severity of results score and a score for discipline severity, the severe discipline could be validated against the maltreatment and thus be termed maltreatment.

3. Developmental Status: The larger study also contained a section where both parents and the child's teacher inventoried the child's behavior on a measure referred to as the Child Behavior Inventory. The individual was given a list of numerous child behaviors such as, "demands attention" to "smiles easily" and asked to indicate whether or not the child exhibited such behaviors. The behaviors were then condensed into seven factors, three emotional, two social, one physical and one cognitive. In this study, we concentrate only on the emotional and social development of the child by using only the social and emotional behavior ratings. The two factors comprising the child's social development are acting out/destructive and affectionate/friendly. The emotional development factors used were angry/negative, self-respecting/happy, and withdrawn/anxious. (Table 1)

4. Socioeconomic Status: Socioeconomic status was obtained through self-reports from the family. Part of the questionnaire concerning SES was a report of the family income. In this study, the income variable was used as a control. This fact is somewhat unique in that very few prior studies of child maltreatment have controlled for SES

Table 1 CBI'S: Child Behavior Ratings

The Five Highest Loading Descriptive
Statistics in Each Factor

ANGRY/NEGATIVE

Stubborn
Irritable
Unusually loud
Temper tantrums
Whines

SELF RESPECTING/HAPPY
Shows delight
Shows self respect
Appears happy
Positive self attitude
Sense of humor

WITHDRAWN/ANXIOUS

Is withdrawn
Unhappy or sad
Worries
Is tense
Expresses worthlessness

ACTING OUT/DESTRUCTIVE

Misbehaves when not indulged
Argues
Gets into fights
Disobeys at home or school
Lies or Cheats

AFFECTIONATE/FRIENDLY

Affectionate
Friendly/Outgoing
Express positive feelings
Concern for others
Gets along with friends

which can be a very powerful factor when studying child development. In other words, a child's inadequate or slowed development could be related to many aspects of lower SES and not directly related to maltreatment. Therefore, if SES can be controlled for and a relationship still exists between maltreatment and development, then it is more feasible to say that the developmental status is affected by maltreatment.

5. Validation of Measures: In order to be sure the measure of maltreatment being used is actually measuring the concept of maltreatment, we need to validate it. To do this, correlations between the severity of results variable and the severity of discipline variable were obtained. These correlations would show whether or not a relationship did exist between the measures and thus show that the measures were all getting at the concept of maltreatment.

6. Multiple Regressions: Once the measures of maltreatment were validated, several multiple regressions were done between the maltreatment variables, the SES variable and the developmental variables in order to see which factors within the equation made up the most variability. In other words, does the emotional maltreatment have the stronger relationship to the child's development or does the physical maltreatment? Perhaps SES has the outstanding effect on development. In any event,

what this study hopes to show at least is that discipline, because of its habitual nature, and in many instances its extreme nature, can be damaging to the child's development which in turn will shed a new light on the definition of maltreatment. At the most, this study would like to show that emotional and physical maltreatment have differential effects on the child's development.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

A. Validity Study

The validity study in this experiment illustrated several interesting points both about correlational studies and maltreatment studies.

The maltreatment variables were not only divided into physical and emotional categories, but within each of these categories, there was a division of mother and father. (Table 2) When looking at the correlations between the severity factors and the disciplinary maltreatment factors we find very significant correlations. (Table 3) Using a significance level of .05, emotional severity is significantly related to preschool and school age father's emotional discipline. However, we also find it significantly related to the fathers' physical discipline, which illustrates one of the points about maltreatment studies; a point which pervades throughout this study.

Table 2 Definition of Variable Labels

INCOM= family income

SEX= the child's sex

AGE= the child's age

PRMOTHE= the preschool mother's emotional discipline
score

PRFATHE= the preschool father's emotional discipline
score

PRMOTHPH= the preschool mother's physical discipline
score

PRFATHPH= the preschool father's physical discipline
score

SCMOTHE= the school age mother's emotional discipline
score

SCFATHE= the school age father's emotional discipline
score

SCMOTHPH= the school age mother's physical discipline
score

SCFATHPH= the school age father's physical discipline
score

ESEVERE= total score for severity of emotional discipline

PSEVERE= total score for severity of physical discipline

VALIDITY STUDY

Table 3

Correlation Table: Validation of the Physical and Emotional Discipline Practices
with the Severity of Results Variables

* indicates significance of at least .05
n=342

INCOM	1.00												
SEX	-.02	1.00											
AGE	-.10	-.04	1.00										
PRMOTHE	-.04	-.11 *	.03	1.00									
PRFATHE	.01	-.14 *	.10 *	.76 *	1.00								
PRMOTHPH	-.23 *	-.14 *	-.06	.39 *	.17 *	1.00							
PRFATHPH	-.10 *	-.14 *	.05	.20 *	.33 *	.36 *	1.00						
SCMOTHE	-.09 *	-.13 *	.04	.44 *	.37 *	.41 *	.13 *	1.00					
SCMOTHPH	-.20 *	-.05	.04	.18 *	.10	.33 *	.20 *	.50 *	1.00				
SCFATHE	.03	-.12 *	.01	.34 *	.40 *	.43 *	.43 *	.70 *	.35 *	1.00			
SCFATHPH	-.19 *	-.01	.13 *	.10	.25 *	.16 *	.51 *	.30 *	.51 *	.51 *	1.00		
ESEVERE	-.02	-.08	.10 *	.05	.27 *	-.05	.10 *	.07	-.00	.11 *	.36 *	1.00	
PSEVERE	-.13 *	-.02	-.00	.16 *	.20 *	.09 *	.14 *	.14 *	.12 *	.07	.00	.14 *	1.00
INCOM		SEX	AGE	PRMOTHE	PRFATHE	PRMOTHPH	PRFATHPH	SCMOTHE	SCMOTHPH	SCFATHE	SCFATHPH	ESEVERE	PSEVERE

Physical and emotional maltreatment have crossover effects. Can we consistently hit a child without it having some emotional effect? Can we emotionally abuse a child without it possibly causing some disorder which manifests itself physically in the child? Thus, in this correlational study we find such crossover effects. Emotional severity, however, does not significantly relate to the preschool or school age mothers' physical or emotional discipline. This fact brings up the second point about correlation studies. Correlations are ruled by the number of subjects within the variables. Thus the lack of a significant correlation does not necessarily mean a lack of a relationship, it might possibly be a lack of subject numbers. In this case mothers are most often the physical disciplinarians, thus the number of mothers making up the factor Eseverity are significantly less than fathers, reducing the subject amount in any of the relationships between Eseverity and mother discipline factors. Because physical discipline is often the more readily used form of discipline, the discipline factors are found to be strongly and significantly related to the physical severity variable. The physical severity factor is significantly related to all mothers and fathers physical and emotional discipline with the exception of school age fathers where there is no relationship. When looking at the validity results overall, combining mother and father, more than half the

time the parental discipline factors are significantly related to the severity factors. More specifically, emotional discipline was significantly and positively related to emotional severity the same amount of times as it was not related. The physical discipline was significantly related to physical severity three more times than it was not related.

As stated previously, physical and emotional maltreatment have crossover effects. The results validate this statement by showing that over half the time, parent's physical discipline was positively correlated to the emotional severity factor and emotional discipline was correlated to the physical severity factor. To prove the point even further, the correlation between the physical severity factor and the emotional severity factor is a positive and significant correlation.

This correlational study is a study of relationships. Showing validity is a difficult task with the use of Pearson correlations. However, the relationships between the severe factors and the discipline factors are strong enough in more cases than not to surmise that similar factors are being measured. It would not be assuming too much for this study's sake to say that the factors of physical and emotional maltreatment are valid. With this assumption stated, the study can move on to further derive

the effect of emotional versus physical maltreatment on the child's development.

B. Multiple Regressions

By placing several variables within an equation we can determine which factors make up the most variability. This is a predictability measure, not a causal one. A multiple regression can test this predictability relationship. Several multiple regressions were performed on the variables using the child's developmental factors as the dependent variables. The age and sex of the child, as well as the income of the family were used as controlling factors within the equation; thus, they were entered first. For if any of these factors made up for most of the variability, the remaining physical and emotional maltreatment factors within the equation would prove insignificant.

V. RESULTS

Analysis of the multiple regressions elicited the following results. (Table 4 & 5) Preschool mothers' and fathers' physical discipline had no effect on the child's developmental status. Preschool mothers' emotional maltreatment had a significant and positive effect on the child factors angry/negative, and acting out/destructive and a negative effect on the child's affectionate/friendly

Table 4 SUMMARY TABLE: Regression Equations
Measuring the Effect of Mothers
Discipline Practices On the Child's
Social and Emotional Factors

PRESCHOOL MOTHERS SCHOOL AGE MOTHERS

Dependent=Angry/Negative

	RSCH	F	SIG	COR		RSCH	F	SIG	COR
AGE	.0094	2.79	.09	.09	AGE	.0190	5.83	.01	.13
SEX	.0165	5.00	.02	-.12	SEX	.0122	3.76	.05	-.10
INCOM	.1143	39.08	.00	-.34	INCOM	.1163	40.77	.00	-.35
EMDISC	.0344	12.20	.00	.20	EMDISC	.0332	12.08	.00	.21
PHDISC	.0095	3.38	.06	.25	PHDISC	.0503	19.43	.00	.35

Dependent=Self Respecting/Happy

AGE	.0051	1.53	.21	-.07	AGE	.0049	1.46	.22	-.06
SEX	.0020	.58	.44	.04	SEX	.0038	1.15	.28	.05
INCOM	.0887	28.83	.00	.30	INCOM	.0811	25.63	.00	.28
EMDISC	.0000	.01	.90	-.01	EMDISC	.0202	6.77	.01	-.16
PHDISC	.0000	.01	.93	-.08	PHDISC	.0073	2.46	.11	-.20

Dependent=Withdrawn/Anxious

AGE	.0139	4.18	.04	.11	AGE	.0136	4.14	.04	.11
SEX	.0084	2.52	.11	-.08	SEX	.0070	2.13	.14	-.07
INCOM	.0571	18.23	.00	-.25	INCOM	.0676	22.15	.00	-.27
EMDISC	.0000	.00	.96	.02	EMDISC	.0019	.60	.43	.06
PHDISC	.0009	.28	.59	.09	PHDISC	.0102	3.37	.06	.16

Dependent=Acting Out/Destructive

AGE	.0168	5.05	.02	.12	AGE	.0314	9.76	.00	.17
SEX	.0140	4.25	.04	-.11	SEX	.0117	3.66	.05	-.09
INCOM	.1128	38.73	.00	-.35	INCOM	.1074	37.82	.00	-.34
EMDISC	.0264	9.32	.00	.18	EMDISC	.0410	15.09	.00	.23
PHDISC	.0076	2.68	.10	.23	PHDISC	.0320	12.23	.00	.32

Dependent=Affectionate/Friendly

AGE	.0005	.07	.78	.02	AGE	.0015	.44	.50	-.03
SEX	.0262	4.38	.03	.15	SEX	.0194	5.95	.01	.13
INCOM	.0648	11.54	.00	.23	INCOM	.0316	9.96	.00	.17
EMDISC	.0273	4.98	.02	-.14	EMDISC	.0043	1.35	.24	-.08
PHDISC	.0001	.02	.07	-.00	PHDISC	.0104	3.30	.07	-.16

Table 5 SUMMARY TABLE: Regression Equations
Measuring the Effect of Fathers
Discipline Practices on the Child's
Social and Emotional Factors

PRESCHOOL FATHERS SCHOOL AGE FATHERS

Dependent=Angry/Negative

	RSCH	F	SIG	COR		RSCH	F	SIG	COR
AGE	.0034	.56	.45	.05	AGE	.0095	1.40	.23	.09
SEX	.0053	.86	.35	-.06	SEX	.0016	.22	.63	-.02
INCOM	.1779	35.43	.00	-.41	INCOM	.1501	25.94	.00	-.39
EMDISC	.0011	.22	.63	.03	EMDISC	.0165	2.89	.09	.11
PHDISC	.0057	1.12	.29	.17	PHDISC	.0771	14.79	.00	.38

Dependent=Self Respecting/Happy

AGE	.0040	.65	.42	-.06	AGE	.0000	.00	.95	.00
SEX	.0037	.60	.44	.05	SEX	.0079	1.17	.28	.08
INCOM	.1554	30.06	.00	.39	INCOM	.1147	18.96	.00	.32
EMDISC	.0225	4.45	.03	.14	EMDISC	.0095	1.58	.21	-.08
PHDISC	.0010	.18	.66	-.01	PHDISC	.0375	6.46	.01	-.27

Dependent=Withdrawn/Anxious

AGE	.0172	2.86	.09	.13	AGE	.0480	7.41	.00	.21
SEX	.0000	.00	.96	.00	SEX	.0001	.01	.89	.01
INCOM	.1243	23.45	.00	-.36	INCOM	.1022	17.44	.00	-.34
EMDISC	.0081	1.53	.21	-.07	EMDISC	.0182	3.15	.07	.12
PHDISC	.0001	.01	.89	.04	PHDISC	.0132	2.31	.13	.23

Dependent=Acting Out/Destructive

AGE	.0095	1.57	.21	.09	AGE	.0109	1.61	.20	.10
SEX	.0072	1.19	.27	-.07	SEX	.0034	.51	.47	-.04
INCOM	.1521	29.65	.00	-.39	INCOM	.1329	22.60	.00	-.36
EMDISC	.0000	.00	.92	.00	EMDISC	.0320	5.61	.01	.16
PHDISC	.0130	2.53	.11	.19	PHDISC	.0328	5.94	.01	.31

Dependent=Affectionate/Friendly

AGE	.0005	.07	.78	-.02	AGE	.0011	.16	.69	.03
SEX	.0262	4.38	.03	.15	SEX	.0315	4.76	.03	.18
INCOM	.0648	11.54	.00	.23	INCOM	.0322	4.99	.02	.15
EMDISC	.0273	4.98	.02	.14	EMDISC	.0065	1.01	.31	-.07
PHDISC	.0001	.02	.87	-.00	PHDISC	.0176	2.76	.09	-.18

outcome. Preschool fathers' maltreatment, however, showed positive effects on the child's self-respecting/happy factor and the affectionate/friendly factor. A possible explanation of this positive effect might be that the child became more outgoing and friendly to gain acceptance from others in order to make up for the lack of fatherly affection. The factor which proved most significant across all aspects of the child's development during these preschool years was the family income. The significance of this finding will be discussed later.

School age mothers' and fathers' physical maltreatment were both significantly and positively related to the child being angry and negative and acting out/destructive. The fathers' maltreatment was also negatively related to the child's self-respect and happiness. Therefore, whereas physical maltreatment at preschool age had no significance on the child's development, physical maltreatment at school age manifested angry, negative and destructive behavior in children as well as less self-respecting and less happy children due to the fathers physical maltreatment. This confirms Sears belief that children who have been physically abused may not only show outward aggression in retaliation, but, at school age, where a child can rationalize physical discipline, create inward aggression and a negative self-image.

School age mothers' and fathers' emotional maltreatment both had a positive relationship to the child's acting out/destructive behavior. The mothers' maltreatment went further to have a positive affect on the child being angry and negative and less self-respecting and happy.

One factor which prevails throughout the analysis, however, is SES. It was consistently and positively related to the child's self-respect and happiness and friendliness, and consistently and negatively related to the child's negativeness, anxiousness and destructiveness. In other words, the higher the family income, the more positive the child's outcome, whereas the lower the income, the more negative the child's outcome. SES is one variable whose strength is usually underestimated in these types of studies. Is it the actual lack of money that creates maldevelopment of the child due to the circumstances that low income creates for the child, or is it the parent-child interaction within low income families that effects child development? This is a question for yet another study. In this study, however, SES was a controlling factor. Because it was entered early in the equation of the multiple regression, any variability it created was accounted for. Any remaining variability was due to the maltreatment.

VI. DISCUSSION

These results seem to corroborate the overall beliefs this study wished to prove. Emotional discipline and physical discipline can be deemed maltreatment when applied consistently and somewhat severely upon a child and, in addition, have a negative affect on the child's social and emotional development. Therefore, abuse can no longer be defined as isolated acts of severity but can be defined as the day to day disciplinary interaction between parent and child. The Herrenkohls' study in 1983 also found that while "bizarre instances of maltreatment were identified, abuse more frequently occurred as part of everyday child rearing activities, not in response to unusual or exceptional events". In addition, the results of this study seem to support the belief that emotional discipline is as harmful to the child's development as is physical. Furthermore, the results of the multiple regression seem to support the more precise purpose of this study, that in fact a more physically maltreating parent produces a more aggressive, destructive and unhappy child, whereas an emotionally maltreating parent may produce a less affectionate, less self-respecting and unhappy child. Therefore, while previous records of abuse have focused on abusive acts resulting in injury or other visible physical evidence, this study wished to illuminate a broader spectrum of abuse. A child is dependent upon the parent for the basic necessities of life such as nourishment and

shelter. But to develop social and emotional competence, a child needs positive parental interaction in the form of support and reinforcement and discipline. However, there is a fine line between parent-child interaction which positively affects a child's social and emotional competence and that which negatively affects it. If we can redefine harsh physical and emotional discipline into measures of abuse, we can redefine all aspects of parent and child interaction into positive or negative measures depending on the effect they may have on a child. Would the answer be to practice little or no discipline? I do not think so. Neglect is another aspect of parent-child interaction which has been shown to carry negative consequences as well. Possible answers may lie in our educational system making parenting courses part of the normal curriculum. Driver's education is standard in most schools. A person needs to be taught how to drive and then must obtain a license to do so. Anyone can become a parent. No training. No license required.

Other solutions may lie in revolutionary thinking on the part of our society by recognizing not only the depth but the width of the abuse problem. It is not just a lower SES phenomenon but it permeates all of society. It is not isolated acts of abuse but day to day negative interaction between parent and child.

It has always been accepted that physical maltreatment would have negative effects on a child's development. This study has also shown that the consistent negative emotional maltreatment also has detrimental effects on the child's development. Once again, it is not just the isolated incidents of harsh emotional maltreatment but the consistent negative interaction a parent pursues with the child.

Further studies in this area may want to define the varying shades of interaction. A slap may seem like a negative interaction but may not actually have negative consequences. If the disciplinarian felt that it would help curb disobedience and improve the child's development and if the child knew he was bad and felt he deserved a reprimand, it would be difficult to define the interaction as negative. Perhaps we need to study a young adult's perception of their parents' discipline along with some of the memorable parent-child interactions they may have had and then test their social and emotional competence as young adults. Whether the discipline is harsh or mild, the underlying perception by both the parent and the child of the quality of interaction between them, seems to be as much of a factor in determining the effect on the child's development as the action itself.

Results of studies like this can be disturbing. For we have taken the definition of child abuse which previously

was reserved for only the child abuse agencies, police records, and low income families, and stretched it out to reach all realms of our society. Child abuse can be isolated severe incidents that "happen to other families," but it can also be the consistent and negative interaction between parent and child, the results of which may be the same. As we pursue the study of child abuse in hopes to find more concise relationships and clearer explanations, we find, instead, more questions arising from the original question. There may be no final answer, but it is the purpose of studies like this to keep at least seeking answers.

NOTES

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- 3 E. Elmer and Gregg "Developmental Characteristics of Abused Children" Pediatrics (Vol 40, 1969), pg 596-602.
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- 13 Wesley Becker "Consequences of Different Kinds of Parental Discipline" Review of Child Development Research (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1964), pg 180-182.
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17 Kinard, "Psychological Consequences of Abuse", pg 92.

18 Ronald Rohner "Antecedents and Consequences of Parental Rejection: A Theory of Emotional Abuse" Child Abuse and Neglect (Vol 4, 1980), pg 192.

19 Rohner, pg 192.

20 Byron Egeland, Alan Sroufe and Martha Erickson "The Developmental Consequences of Different Patterns of Maltreatment" Child Abuse and Neglect (Vol 7, 1983).

21 Kinard "Psychological Consequences of Abuse", pg 93.

22 Kinard, pg 87.

23 Kinard, pg 93.

24 Rohner, pg 189.

25 Rohner, pg 190.

26 Rohner, pg 192.

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